

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 072370
ORIGIN SS-15

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /016 R

66011

DRAFTED BY:IO:GBHELMAN

APPROVED BY:IO:TBROWN

S/S:MVKENNEDY

-----074203 211915Z /47

O 211857Z MAR 78

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

INFO USMISSION USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 4608

S E C R E T STATE 072370

EXDIS

FOLLOWING REPEAT TEL AVIV 3779 ACTION SECSTATE DAMASCUS BEIRUT
INFO AMMAN JERUSALEM JIDDA KUWAIT MAR 20

QUOTE S E C R E T TEL AVIV 3779

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, SY, LE, IS

SUBJECT: SOUTH LEBANON: MOVEMENT OF IRAQI TRUCK CONVOY

REF: STATE 071173

1. REACHED WEIZMAN ON THEPHONE AT HOME AT 0015 HOURS
(MARCH 21 AND CONVEYED MESSAGE (REFTEL).

2. DURING SUBSEQUENT CONVERSATION WEIZMAN (WHO WAS IN A VERY SOBER
MOOD) MADE FOLLOWING POINTS:

-- HE IS TRYING HIS BEST TO CALM SITUATION. IT HAD BEEN "TOUCH
AND GO" TODAY AND HE HAD BEEN UNDER GREAT PRESSURE TO "BLOW TO
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HELL" THE IRAQI TRUCK CONVOY. HE HAD NOT DONE SO BECAUSE HE
REALIZED THIS WOULD HAVE "LIT THE FUSE," AS HE PUT IT.

--THE ISRAELIS HAVE INFORMATION THAT MORE IRAQI CONVOYS ARE ON
THE WAY. THERE IS REASON TO BELIEVE THE IRAQIS MAY TRY TO
RELIEVE TYRE. THIS HAS TO STOP. ISRAEL WILL NOT TOLERATE
THE PRESENCE OF IRAQIS IN NABATIYAH OR TYRE.

--WEIZMAN IS PREPARED FOR IMMEDIATE INDIRECT TALKS WITH

THE SYRIANS THROUGH THE US TO SEEK A WAY TO DEFUSE THE SITUATION. HE WILL HOLD OFF ATTACKING THE IRAQIS FOR A SHORT WHILE LONGER, BUT IF REINFORCEMENTS CONTINUE FLOWING INTO NABATIYAH OR IF EFFORTS ARE MADE TO RELIEVE TYRE, "WE SHALL HAVE TO DO SOMETHING."

3. WEIZMAN SAID HE HAD A GOOD TALK THIS AFTERNOON WITH SIIL-

-SVUO. HE BELIEVED THAT "WE CAN FIND A COMMON LANGUAGE," BUT HE WANTED TO MAKE ABSOLUTELY SURE THAT ISRAEL'S ARRANGEMENTS WITH THE UNIFIL WERE WORKED OUT IN A MANNER "SO THAT WE WON'T HAVE TO GO BACK IN THERE IN ANOTHER 3 OR 4 MONTHS."

4. I REITERATED THE IMPERATIVE NEED FOR ISRAELI RESTRAINT AND WARNED OF THE DIRE CONSEQUENCES IF THE ISRAELIS GO OFF HALF-COCKED IN THIS SITUATION. WEIZMAN SAID HE UNDERSTOOD CLEARLY OUR MESSAGE. HE ASKED THAT I CONVEY TO THE SECRETARY HIS GRATITUDE FOR WHATEVER CAN BE DONE TO HALT IRAQI INTERVENTION. HE SAID HE DID NOT INSIST THAT THE IRAQIS RETURN HOME, BUT "YOU MUST GET THEM OUT OF NABATIYAH TO THE NORTH." AS FAST AS POSSIBLE. MEANWHILE, HE SAID HE WOULD DO HIS BEST TO KEEP THE LID ON. VIETS. UNQUOTE VANCE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: TROOP DEPLOYMENT, MILITARY PLANS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 21 mar 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978STATE072370
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: IO:GBHELMAN
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780124-0903
Format: TEL
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780341/aaaabitg.tel
Line Count: 85
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: 9e2861c0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ORIGIN SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 78 STATE 71173
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 22 jun 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 3252510
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOUTH LEBANON: MOVEMENT OF IRAQI TRUCK CONVOY
TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, SY, LE, IS, IZ
To: USUN NEW YORK
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odb://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/9e2861c0-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014